MINUTES

OF THE

SECOND ANNIVERSARY,

OF THE

NORTH RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

CONVENED AT SALEM MEETING HOUSE,

TUSCALOOSA COUNTY, ALABAMA.

From the 15th to the 17th of September 1836.

Tuscaloosa:

PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF THE FLAG OF THE UNION.

1836.

MINUTES

OF THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF THE

NORTH RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

---

1. The Introductory Sermon was delivered by Elder Elijah Barbe, from Romans ix, 33. "As it is written, Behold I lay in Sion a stumbling stone, and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him, shall not be ashamed."

2. After prayer by E. Barbe, proceeded to business, called for and read letters from the several Churches, enrolled the names of delegates and minuted the state of the Churches.

3. Elected Elder David Andrews, Moderator; and Armestead Cole, Clerk.

4. Appointed a Committee composed of Bro. J. Yerby, Black, Wright, Borough, and Files, with the Moderator and Clerk to arrange the business necessary to come before the Association.

5. Appointed Bro. Willis Richards, and Jesse Waldin, a Committee of Finance.

6. Adjourned until to-morrow 10 o'clock.

7. Met according to adjournment. After prayer by the Moderator, called for the report of the committee of arrangements, which was read and received, and they discharged.

8. Read the rules of Decorum.

9. The Circular Letter called for, read, and ordered to be prepared for the press.

10. Called on the committee of finance to make report, which report may be seen in the table.

11. *Resolved*, That the Constitution and the confession of faith, be reprinted and corrected.

Appointed Bro. Samuel Harris, to preach the Introductory sermon, at the next Association, in case of failure, Bro. Richard Walding, which is to convene at Shepherd Church, Fayette county, twelve miles below Fayetteville, on the West side of Sipsey river.

Appointed Elder E. Barbe, to prepare the Circular Letter.

Appointed four Union meetings:

The first to commence at Liberty Church, in Tuscaloosa county, Friday before the fourth Sabbath in August, 1837: the second to commence at Union Church, Fayette county, Friday before the first Sabbath in September, 1837; third to commence at Sion Church, Marion county, Friday before the second Sabbath in September, 1837; the fourth to commence at Bethlaham, Tuscaloosa county, Friday before the fourth Lord's Day in September, 1837.

Appointed Bro. Cole, to superintend the printing the minutes, and two hundred copies be struck.

Ordered, That the Clerk be paid five dollars for his services.

Ordered, That this Association tender their thanks to the neighborhood of Salem Church, for their hospitality to the messengers and delegates.

DAVID ANDREWS, *Moderator.*

ARMESTEAD COLE, *Clerk.*

CONSTITUTION.

We, the united Baptist Churches of Jesus Christ, in Alabama, that believe the doctrine of *a free salvation and a general attonement.*

We all have been baptised upon a profession of our faith in Christ. We are desirous of a reciprocal union; we therefore purpose to maintain the order and rules of an Association according to the following plan.

We believe that the Churches of Christ are mutually independent of each other, and that the Congressional form of Church government should be inviolably preserved, yet being convinced of the utility of friendly intercourse and pious councils, on the principles of reciprocal advantage and Christian love; we hold it to be a duty of the Churches to pay respect, on these principles to the advice of the Association.

Art. 1. This Association shall be composed of members, chosen by the different Churches in our Union, who on producing letters from their respective Churches certifying their appointment, shall be entitled to seats. The letters so produced shall express the condition of their Churches respectively, viz: the number of male and female members in fellowship, the number received by Baptism, by letters, restored, excommunicated and dead since the last Association, which letters shall be read and the Delegates names enrolled.

Art. 2. The members thus chosen and convened shall be known by the name of the North River Baptist Association.

Art. 3. The Association thus formed shall choose by the suffrages of the members present, a Moderator and Clerk, who shall serve one year.

Art. 4. This body shall have no coercive power to lord it over God's heritage or to infringe on any of the internal privileges or rights of the Churches in our Union, but shall only be considered an advisory council in all matters respecting their internal concerns.

Art. 5. To give Churches the best advice she can in all matters of difficulty, and if the Union should be broken between any of the sister Churches, to inquire into the cause of the breach, and use her best endeavors to remove the difficulty; but if the breach cannot be repaired, to withdraw from any Church or Churches, which they may look upon to be unsound in principle or immoral in practice, until they be reclaimed.

Art. 6. To take up no case of any church in the Union without the consent of a majority of the Church, and then only to advise.

Art. 7. Newly constituted or dismissed Churches, may be received into our union, by their representatives chosen as before stated; and the Moderator shall signify the same, by giving them the right hand of fellowship.

Art. 8. The Association when convened shall be governed by such rules as she may adopt, she may adjourn from day to day, until she shall have finished all the business that may be brought before her.

Art. 9. Every Church shall be entitled to a representation of three members.

Art 10. To have the Minutes of the Assaciation read and altered if necessary and signed by the Moderator and Clerk before the Association rises, and have them printed if she thinks proper.

Art. 11. The Association shall, in all cases be governed by a majority of the members prsaent.

Art. 12. Voting shall be confined exclusively to the body, in all acts representing their internal concerns.

Art. 13. To amend this plan or form of government at any time, when a majority of the Union shall deem it necessary.

—

CONFESSION OF FAITH.

We believe the Scriptures comprising the Old and New Testament, are the word of God, and that all Scriptures are given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work that they be infallaby true, furnish the only sure and unerring standard of faith and practice for individuals and Churches. We believe that among the abundant truths which they contain, the following are important:

Art. 1. We believe that there is one God.

Art. 2. We believe that there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are One.

Art. 3. We believe the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and is called Emanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Art. 4. We believe that God created man upwright but he abode not in honor, but transgressed the law given him, fell under its penalty and his posterity has been and still is under its curse, and by reason of actual transgression superadded to his fallen nature is liable to eternal punishment, and from the dire calamities which sin has subjected him to, he, of himself, has no means by which to extricate himself and reinstate himself in the image and favor of God.

Art. 5. We believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and second Adam, did represent just as many as the first, consequently made an atonement for all men. But the benefits of the atonement, spiritually are only received by the true believer.

Art. 6. We believe that notwithstanding our fallen and ruined condition, that God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son

that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. That He Himself bore our sins in His own body, on the tree of the Cross; that he was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification, ascended into Heaven where as the Mediator and high Priest our profession, he ever liveth to make intercession for us.

Art. 7. We believe that in view of all these provisions richly and abundantly furnished in the Gospel, in which are included His revealed will, and the preaching of the Gospel by men of like passions with ourselves, God commands all men every where to repent and believe the Gospel, promising Salvation to such as obey, and threatning damnation to such as believe not, love nots and obey not our Lord Jesus Christ.

Art. 8. We believe that the Holy Ghost which is the comforter, has been sent into the world to reprove the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment, and to abide with the children of God as their guide and comforter.

Art. 9. We believe it is the duty of all men every where to repent and believe the Gospel; and of all who do to be immersed in water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and that faith, repentance and baptism, are prerequisite to membership.

Art. 10. We believe that all pious Christians, who are orderly members of their Churches, should be invited to communicate whenever the Lord's table is spread and opportunity is offered.

Art. 11. We believe it the duty of the disciples of Christ to obey all his commandments, and follow on to know the Lord, to live soberly, righteously, and Godly, in the present world, ever looking to Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our Faith, and give none occasion of offence, neither to Jew nor Gentile, nor to the Church of God. Their privilege is, to persevere in the ways of well-doing, through grace to glory to grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, ever bearing in mind that our Lord hath said without me, ye can do nothing.

Art. 12. We believe that there will be a resurrection both of the just and unjust, and a general judgment after the reunion of soul and body, and judgment in righteousness will exalt and introduce the righteousness into life everlasting in Heaven, while it shall sentence the wicked into eternal banishment from God, and consign them to the lake where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.

The foregoing declaration is not intended to lord it over God's heritage, but regarding the New Testament as containing the law of the Lord. We would judge of every case either of doctrine, government, or discipline by that law and that alone.

RULES OF DECORUM.

Rule 1. The Association shall be opened by prayer.

Rule 2. But one person shall speak at a time, and he shall rise and address the Moderator.

Rule 3. No member shall be interrupted while speaking, unless he

departs from the subject in question or uses words of a personal reflection.

Rule 4. Every motion made and seconded shall come under the consideration of the Association, except withdrawn by him who made it.

Rule 5. Every case taken up by the Association shall first be decided or withdrawn before another is offered.

Rule 6. When any question is taken up by the Association after allowing time for debate, the Moderator shall take the question, and those in favor of the question proposed shall rise on their feet, and those against it shall keep their seats. The decision thus made shall be announced by the Moderator immediately.

Rule 7. No person shall depart from the service of the Association without leave of the Moderator.

Rule 8. No person shall speak more than twice on the same subject without leave obtained.

Rule 9. The appellation of Brother shall be used in our address to one another.

Rule 10. The Moderator shall be entitled to the same privileges as any other member, provided he appoints some other member to fill his seat while speaking or otherwise, but shall not vote unless the Association be equally divided.

Rule 11. Any member violating the above rules may be reproved as the Association may think proper only on the same day the offence shall have occurred.

STATE OF THE CHURCHES.

Churches	Counties.	C.	M.	Ministers and Delegates.	Baptism.	Letters.	Secessions.	Dismissed.	Excommunicated.	Restored.	Deceased.	Total.	$ cts
Salem	Tuscaloosa	3	S.	David Andrews, Willis Richards, John Baker.	0	2	0	2	1	0	0	74	4 00
Liberty	Tuscaloosa	4	S.	Armestead Cole, John Yerby, Samuel Harris	5	3	4	1	0	0	1	27	2 00
Union	Fayette	1	S.	Jacob Feltman, Jacob Black, John Ray	8	1	1	3	1	0	0	30	1 10
Shepherd	Fayette	2	S.	Hogan Yerby, Jesse Walden, Meal Right.	1	4	1	1	0	0	0	26	2 00
Sion	Marion	2	S.	Elias McClung,† Samuel Webster, John Borough.	10	0	2	0	0	0	0	24	1 50
Bethlehem	Tuscaloosa	1	S.	Abner Files, David Stanley, Richard Files.	2	1	1	0	0	0	8	19	1 25
												200	11 85

Ministers names in SMALL CAPITALS—absentees marked (†)

CIRCULAR.

DEAR BRETHREN: The time has now arrived, when it was expected that we, according to previous appointments, should address you on some subject of religion; I therefore choose the all important doctrines of the atonement. The atonement is the only sure foundation on which mortals can build their hopes of eternal life, for being fallen by sin and transgression, under the curse of the Law, they are dead in trespasses and sins, and of themselves, have neither will nor power to fulfil the Law, for they are Carnal minded and therefore dead; for to be Carnal minded is death: (Romans viii, 8 and 6,) "and the Carnal mind is enmity to God, not subject to the Law, neither indeed can be:" Romans viii, 8 and 7, therefore, is is evident, that no man is able, since the fall, perfectly to keep the Law; for first, in becoming Carnal minded he became an enemy to God, and this enmity is death; then first, man had no will to keep the Law, because it requires him to love God whom he hates; then if he has not the will he cannot have the power, for love being a voluntary act, must proceed from the will; and hence, we see that by the deeds of the Law no flesh can be justified, and as all were under the Law it was necessary that they should be redeemed from the curse of the Law, under which they had fallen by sin and transgression. This could not be done until the Law be fulfilled, this Jesus Christ done, first. he took the place of the guilty, fulfilled the Law in his stead, and died to make an atonement for sin and to reconcile man to God. Therefore, we believe that the atonement is the only foundation that we may with safety build our hopes upon; then all who are included in that atonement may with safety build thereon, and all who are not included therein, (if such there can be) that may presume to build thereon, will be esteemed intruders, theives, and robbers; therefore, it is a sin for them to cliam any part in the provisions of the Gospl, and on the other hand, if all are included in the atonement all may build thereon, and he that does not will be condemned for not believing and obeying the Gospel;—"You will not come unto me that ye might have life," and those that teach them to believe that a part of the human family are left out, that there is no ground for them to hope to be saved, are those "that darkeneth Counsel by words without knowledge," (Job xxxviii, 2,) who cause the people to err, to stumble and to fall into hell, they are as those of whom the Saviour says, "Ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye enter not in yourselves, and them that entering in ye hinder, Luke xi, 52; therefore it is highly necessary that we know the extent of the atenement. The word atonement, signifies covering; then the atonement covers original guilt,—now this was represented by the covering of the ark which was died red, over the mercy seat, signifying that the blood of Jesus Christ covered original sin, and that God would be merciful through Christ, who was made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law. Now to redeem is to buy back that which was previously sold; also, to rescue from danger and distress. Then the redemption here spoken of, is the price of obedience and suffering that Christ has paid by his life and death to satisfy the demands of the law and justice by which he has redeemed man from under the curse of the Law, and the penalty due to sin. Therefore we are no longer under the Law as a covenant, but as a school master to bring us to Christ; it is a rule by which we must square our lives and actions, for it teaches us our duty to God and man, but as we are fallen and not able to fulfil its precepts, Christ has fulfilled them and now offers life and salvation to all who come to God through him, therefore as all were under the Law as a covenant of works by which they were to be justified or condemned, and all had broken thir covenant and consequently fallen into condemnation; even for this cause was Christ made under the Law, that he might fulfil the Law for man, and thereby redeem them from under the curse, being made a curse for them, (Gal. iii, 13;) hence all are redeemed, wherefore

they are no more under the Law as a covenant of life, but under grace that is a dispensation of mercy which requires repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, but let it be remembered that as there must be two to make a covenant, we the redeemed from the Law and under a dispensation of mercy, yet we cannot be said to be in covenant with Christ till we believe the terms are made known, but we must accept of the terms and comply with the same if we would be saved, but let us return to the subject. "He died for all, that they which live should not live unto themselves but unto him who died for them and rose again, (2 Cor. v, 15.) Here the Apostle tells us, first, that He died for all; and 2dly, the reason why; that we might not live to ourselves in sin, but to Christ; that is by faith and repentance and Holy obedience to his will. Again, He tasted death for every man. (Heb. ii, 9,) From these and many other passages of scripture, it appears that Christ evidently died for all the world. Why then will any say that there is not a chance for all to be saved? They tell us that God calls some with an irresistable call, and those are sure to come, and that he calls others with a common call which they say is not sufficient to enable them to come. Hence they make God a respecter of persons; we believe that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to a knowledge of the truth and be saved; if any differ from us in this opinion, they also differ from Paul—1 Tim. ii, 4: first God will have all men to come to a knowledge of the truth; this can only be done by the Holy Spirit for no man knoweth the drawings of the spirit but by the spirit; therefore, if it is the will of God that all come to the knowledge of the truth, we are sure that He will do all that is necessary on his part, and if the Lord wills or is willing that all should be saved He surely does all that is necessary to enable them to come. They are first called by the Spirit and if they will hear and obey, they are taught the knowledge of the truth, but if they refuse and rebell they are left to perish in unbelief, for God is no respecter of persons, (Acts x, 34, and Epesians vi, 91;) but in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him, and we understand that a man is either justified by faith or damned for the want of faith (*i. e.*) for not believing;—first justified by faith that is by trusting in Jesus Christ as his Saviour; believing that he died for, and is willing to save him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of all them that diligently seek Him. Then the sinner for whom Christ did not die, and who He is not willing to save, must be damned for not believing that which it was not in his power to believe, and which was not true in itself; but the idea is shocking, for it does represent God as more inconsistent than man, that he calls on man to repent and to believe, and determines to withhold the aid that is necessary, and then damns the sinner for not complying. Now the sum of what we have said is this, that all men are sinners by nature, and as such they are condemned by the Law without either will or power to fulfil the Law, and that Christ died to redeem all, and that the Spirit does call every man, and therefore all may repent and believe and be saved. if they will, and if any man is lost it is his own fault,—then, dear brethren, Let us be steadfast immoveable always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord, let us endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus, ever looking to Him who is the author and finisher of our faith, remembering the trials and afflictions that He endured for us; that though He was rich, yet, for our sakes he became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich. And finally, be ye all of one mind, love as brethren, be courteous and let the mind that was Christ Jesus dwell in you, that you may grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whom to know is life eternal, to whom be glory, both now and forever, Amen.